

## **Competing Approaches to the Israel-Palestine Conflict: Sun Tzu Meets Western International Relations Theory**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The article examines Israel's strategic use of archaeology as a political instrument in Jerusalem, analysing this conduct through two complementary analytical frameworks: Western International Relations (IR) theory and the classical strategic philosophy of Sun Tzu. The Western tradition encompassing the realist and neo-realist scholarship of Thucydides, Machiavelli, Morgenthau, Waltz, Mearsheimer, and Zakaria constitutes the dominant paradigm in IR analyses of the Israel–Palestine conflict, identifying power, threat perception, and systemic anarchy as the principal drivers of inter-state behaviour. This article argues, however, that Sun Tzu's concept of indirect war subduing an adversary without direct military engagement offers a complementary and analytically indispensable perspective for understanding Israeli conduct in Jerusalem in the post-1967 period. Employing a qualitative research design and drawing on primary legal instruments, institutional reports, and secondary historical scholarship, the study demonstrates that Israel's systematic exploitation of archaeological excavations, expropriation law, demographic engineering, and non-state proxies constitutes a form of institutionalised indirect warfare consistent with Sun Tzu's doctrine of deception and strategic subversion. The findings indicate that Israel's approach to the annexation of Jerusalem operates through the gradual erosion of Palestinian historical claims and the juridical–spatial transformation of the city, thereby avoiding the costs of open military confrontation. This interdisciplinary analysis contributes to both Middle East conflict studies and the comparative scholarship of classical strategic thought.

**Keywords:** Sun Tzu; realism; neo-realism; indirect war; archaeology; Jerusalem; national interest; Israel–Palestine conflict

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## INTRODUCTION

Since 1948, Israel has consolidated much of historic Palestine through the sustained application of military force. Israeli military conduct has been extensively theorised through the realist tradition in International Relations (IR), which foregrounds power, security, and structural anarchy as the primary determinants of state behaviour. Yet when analytical attention shifts to Israeli strategy in Jerusalem specifically and particularly in the period following the Six-Day War of 1967 a broader and more differentiated analytical framework is required. In the post-1967 era, Israel has increasingly relied upon non-military instruments to occupy and consolidate Palestinian territories: instruments that include archaeological excavations, legal expropriation, demographic transformation, and the strategic deployment of non-state proxies.

This disposition aligns with unusual precision to the strategic philosophy of Sun Tzu, who wrote in *The Art of War* (c. 500 BCE): "For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill. Thus, what is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy" (Griffith, 2005, p. 115). The argument of this article is that Sun Tzu's concept of indirect warfare the systematic destruction of an adversary's strategy, resources, and historical legitimacy through means short of open military engagement provides a productive and underutilised framework for understanding Israeli conduct in Jerusalem in the decades since 1967.

The article is structured as follows. Section two provides a historical overview of the conflict's origins. Section three examines the strategic and civilisational significance of Jerusalem. Section four analyses Israel's post-1967 consolidation strategies. Section five situates these strategies within the Western IR literature on realism and neo-realism. Section six establishes the rationale for applying Sun Tzu's framework. Section seven develops a Sun Tzu-based interpretation of Israeli indirect warfare in Jerusalem. Section eight discusses the findings and their implications. Section nine offers a conclusion.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Western IR Theories: Realism and Neo-Realism**

The dominant analytical tradition in IR scholarship on the Israel–Palestine conflict is realism. As Nye (2009, p. 182) observes, the conflict best fits a realist account of international politics, even

as it remains a domain in which international law and organisations have played a significant role. The contest over a symbolically maximally charged territory, prosecuted through a zero-sum logic of fear, suspicion, and threat, exhibits the defining characteristics of the realist paradigm.

Classical realists ground the origins of conflict in human nature and the universal drive for power. Thucydides (430–406 BCE), writing in *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, contended that international politics is governed by a continuous struggle for power that renders justice and law subordinate to interest. Machiavelli (1532), in *The Prince*, argued that effective leadership demands constant adaptation to shifting configurations of power. Morgenthau (1948) formalised these insights, arguing that international conduct is best understood through interest defined in terms of power (Baylis, 2008, p. 96). In the Israel–Palestine context, the hawkish disposition of successive Israeli governments and the consistent primacy accorded to national interest over international legal norms reflect these classical realist dynamics.

Structural realism shifts the causal focus from human nature to the anarchic structure of the international system. Rousseau (1750), in *The State of War*, argued that systemic anarchy rather than human nature per se generates fear, jealousy, and insecurity among states. Waltz (1979), in *Theory of International Politics*, formalised this insight, arguing that anarchy produces a self-help system in which states seek to maximise their security (Baylis, 2019, p. 124). Mearsheimer (2001), in *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, extended the argument, asserting that the anarchic self-help system compels states to maximise their relative power a dynamic manifest in Israel's sustained strategic superiority vis-à-vis its adversaries.

Zakaria (1998), however, argues that the systemic account of structural realism is incomplete without an intervening variable of state strength. State strength, defined as "the ability of a state to mobilise and direct the resources at its disposal in the pursuit of particular interests" (Zakaria, 1998, p. 42), determines the extent to which state elites can translate systemic opportunities into foreign policy behaviour. Neo-classical realists including Christensen, Schweller, and Zakaria further insist that states adapt to their external environment through the mediation of domestic political structures and leadership perceptions. As Schweller (2004, p. 164) notes, "states assess and adapt to changes in their external environment partly because of their peculiar domestic structures and political situations." Zakaria (1998, p. 198) concludes that an adequate account of foreign policy must incorporate systemic, domestic, and other influences, specifying what each

explains. These frameworks collectively illuminate the interplay between Israel's security environment, domestic political pressures, and the strategic choices of successive governments.

### **Sun Tzu's Strategic Thought and Indirect Warfare**

Despite the rich body of scholarship on realism and neo-realism, researchers have rarely applied Sun Tzu's thought to the Israel–Palestine conflict (Tao, 2007). The barriers include the complexity of Sun Tzu's philosophical vocabulary and the linguistic and cultural distance between *The Art of War* and the Western IR tradition. Yet Sun Tzu's framework offers a distinctive contribution, particularly for understanding forms of political violence and territorial control that fall below the threshold of conventional military engagement.

Sun Tzu articulates a philosophy of war premised on the superiority of psychological and strategic subversion over direct military force. His foundational hierarchy of strategic methods first to destroy the enemy's strategy, second to sever their alliances, third to engage their armies, and only lastly to besiege their cities implies that open military conflict is the least efficient and most costly means of attaining strategic objectives (Griffith, 2005, p. 115). This doctrine of indirect war is complemented by Sun Tzu's maxim that "all warfare is based on deception" (Griffith, 2005, p. 96): the capacity to conceal one's strength, feign incapacity, and strike where the adversary is unprepared constitutes, for Sun Tzu, the highest form of strategic intelligence.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This article employs a qualitative research design. Data were collected from two categories of sources. Primary sources include official legal instruments (Israeli Basic Laws, the Israel–Jordan Peace Treaty of 1994, UN resolutions), institutional reports (Emek Shaveh, Ir Amim/Keshev, the International Crisis Group, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre Status Report), and direct citations from Sun Tzu's *Art of War* in the authoritative Griffith (2005) translation. Secondary sources include peer-reviewed historical, IR, and strategic studies scholarship on the Israel–Palestine conflict, realist IR theory, and classical Chinese strategic thought.

The analytical method is interpretive and comparative. Israeli strategic conduct in Jerusalem as documented in primary and secondary sources is first situated within the Western IR theoretical framework of realism and neo-realism, and then subjected to a systematic comparative analysis against Sun Tzu's doctrines of indirect warfare, deception, and strategic attack. The two

frameworks are treated as complementary rather than competing: realism and neo-realism explain the structural and motivational dimensions of Israeli conduct, while Sun Tzu's doctrine illuminates its operational character and tactical logic. This dual-framework approach is intended to demonstrate the analytical value of integrating non-Western strategic thought into mainstream IR scholarship.

The study acknowledges several limitations. The evidence base for the Sun Tzu-based interpretation is primarily inferential: the argument that Israeli strategists have consciously adopted Sun Tzu's doctrines rests on the structural correspondence between observable Israeli conduct and Sun Tzu's principles, rather than on documentary evidence of direct intellectual lineage. The analysis is also necessarily selective, focusing on Jerusalem and the post-1967 period rather than the conflict as a whole. Future empirical research might usefully examine the extent to which Sun Tzu's thought has been formally incorporated into Israeli military and strategic doctrine.

### **Historical Background: The Origins of the Conflict**

The origins of the Israel–Palestine conflict are conventionally traced to the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917, in which Arthur Balfour, British Foreign Secretary, communicated to Lord Rothschild the British government's support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. This declaration was preceded by the sustained lobbying of Zionist organisations led by Theodor Herzl (1860–1904) and Chaim Weizmann (1874–1952), whose programme had gained significant purchase within the British establishment through works including Leo Pinsker's *Autoemancipation* and Herzl's *The State of the Jews*. As Safty (2009, p. 15) observes, once the Balfour Declaration had secured imperial backing for the Zionist programme, confrontation with Palestinian nationalism on its own territory became structurally inevitable. British Mandate policies and intensifying Zionist activities generated inter-communal violence in 1921 and 1929, plunging the Mandate into protracted instability.

The Peel Commission Report of 1937 recommended the partition of Palestine, generating further Arab resistance. The Zionist Biltmore Program of 1942, endorsed by the US Congress in 1944, envisaged the entirety of Palestine as a Jewish state. On 29 November 1947, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 181, mandating partition into Arab and Jewish states. Upon British withdrawal, Ben-Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel on 14 May 1948, receiving immediate *de*

*facto* recognition from President Truman.<sup>1</sup> Khalidi (1971, p. ixv) has argued that Truman's endorsement was a direct cause of the destruction of the Palestinian Arab community in 1948 and the rise of the Israeli state. The Arab League invasion on 15 May 1948 opened the first Arab–Israeli War, to be followed by the Suez Crisis (1956), the Six-Day War (1967), the War of Attrition (1968), the Yom Kippur War (1973), and the ongoing military confrontation between Israel and Hamas.

### **Jerusalem: Strategic and Civilisational Significance**

Jerusalem constitutes one of the most contested sites in the contemporary international order, its complexity rooted in more than three millennia of layered history spanning Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Hasmonean, Herodian, Roman, Byzantine, Umayyad, Crusader, Ayyubid, Mamluk, Ottoman, British, and Jordanian rule before passing under Israeli control in 1967.<sup>2</sup> This history has generated competing religious and national narratives, particularly regarding the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif (hereinafter TMH), a site of approximately 144,000 square metres (Lundquist, 2008, p. 103) sacred to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

For Jews, the TMH is inseparable from the reigns of King David<sup>3</sup> and King Solomon,<sup>4</sup> who is held to have built the First Temple on Mount Moriah around 960 BCE. That structure was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BCE. Jews call the Western Wall the "Wailing Wall" a site of devotion whose contested symbolism triggered the riots of 1929<sup>5</sup> while Muslims know it as the al-Buraq Wall. For Christians, Jerusalem is the site of the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus

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<sup>1</sup>The term *de facto* denotes, according to the Cambridge Dictionary, something "existing in fact, although perhaps not intended, legal, or accepted."

<sup>2</sup>Jerusalem has been known by different names throughout history. In Jewish scriptures it appears as Salem, Urusalim, Mount Moriah, Jebus, Zion, and Ariel. In Hebrew it is *Yerushalayim* ("City of Peace"); in Arabic, *Bayt al-Maqdis* (House of Sanctity) or *al-Quds al-Sharif* (Noble Holy Place). See Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>In Islamic tradition, David is honoured as the Prophet Dawud. For detailed treatment, see Richard A. Gabriel, *The Military History of Ancient Israel* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), pp. 229–282.

<sup>4</sup>In Islamic tradition, Solomon is revered as the Prophet Sulayman. See James Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1986), pp. 189–216; Michael D. Coogan, *A Brief Introduction to the Old Testament: The Hebrew Bible in Its Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>5</sup>A screen separating male and female Jewish worshippers at the Western Wall triggered the 1929 riots, in which approximately 100 Jews were killed. See Michael Dumper, *The Politics of Sacred Space: The Old City of Jerusalem in the Middle East Conflict* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), pp. 77–78.

Christ (the Prophet Isa) and has served as a pilgrimage destination since the fourth century CE.<sup>6</sup> The principal Christian denominations have largely accommodated their interests through the Vatican's December 1993 accord with Israel.<sup>7</sup>

For Muslims, Jerusalem is revered as *Bayt al-Maqdis* (the Noble Sanctuary) the third holiest city in Islam and is directly connected to the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey (*al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj*).<sup>8</sup> These overlapping sacred claims, historical narratives, and legal assertions create conditions of structurally embedded contestation that are not amenable to resolution through conventional diplomatic means alone, rendering Jerusalem what both parties regard as an existential issue in the realisation of their respective national aspirations.

### **Israel's Post-1967 Consolidation Strategy in Jerusalem**

Israel occupied East Jerusalem following the defeat of Jordanian forces in the Six-Day War of 1967 and subsequently implemented a multi-instrumental strategy of consolidation. These instruments included: the unification of West and East Jerusalem within a single municipality (28 June 1967); the Knesset's passage of Basic Law No. 1 in 1980 declaring Jerusalem the unified and undivided capital of Israel<sup>9</sup>; the construction of Jewish settlements including French Hill, Giloh, East Talpiot, Ramot, Neveh Yaakov, Pisgat Ze'ev, and Har Homa; the Absentee Property Law of 1950, which vested custodial rights over Palestinian-owned land in the Israeli state; and the securing of US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital during the first Trump administration (Dumper, 2014).

In the post-1967 period, Israel employed further mechanisms of territorial consolidation: construction of the West Bank Barrier (from 2000) to restrict Palestinian movement into

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<sup>6</sup>Principal Christian holy sites in Jerusalem include the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Church of All Nations, the Cenacle, Golgotha, Mount Zion, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Mount of Olives, and the Via Dolorosa.

<sup>7</sup>The Vatican and Israel signed a Fundamental Agreement in December 1993 providing for mutual recognition, exchange of ambassadors, and agreement on pilgrimage, religious freedom, and access to holy places. See Marshall J. Breger and Thomas A. Idinopulos, *Jerusalem's Holy Places and the Peace Process*, Policy Paper No. 46 (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998), pp. 30–35.

<sup>8</sup>The Night Journey is referenced in the Quran (17:1): "Glory to Allah, Who did take His Servant for a Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Furthest Mosque, whose precincts We did bless in order that We might show him some of Our Signs."

<sup>9</sup>The Holy Basin (also known as the Historic Basin) is located in the Old City of Jerusalem in East Jerusalem, occupied by Israel in 1967. A former Israeli negotiator indicated that the Israeli government's definition of the Holy Basin includes Mount Zion, located west of the Green Line, and that Israel construes the Basin narrowly so as to place as many Palestinians as possible within a future Palestinian state. See International Crisis Group, *Extreme Makeover? (I): Israel's Politics of Land and Faith in East Jerusalem*, Middle East Report No. 134, 20 December 2012, p. 16.

Jerusalem; state funding for settler organisations (the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, Ateret Cohanim, Elad) engaged in the Judaisation of East Jerusalem; the establishment of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) as an instrument of archaeological policy; the imposition of restrictions on the Islamic Waqf's exercise of its *status quo* prerogatives; and support for temple activist organisations (Ir Amim and Keshev Report, 2013). As Hall-Cathala (1990, pp. 4–5) argues, the June 1967 war marked a decisive inflection point in Israeli political identity, accelerating the ascendancy of ethno-religious nationalism over the secular democratic values of the state's founding generation.

Israel is also constrained by its treaty commitments. Article 9 of the Israel–Jordan Peace Treaty of 1994 obliges Israel to respect Jordan's special role in Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem,<sup>10</sup> a position further entrenched by Jordan's 2013 treaty with the Palestinian Authority. When international or Jordanian pressure intensifies, Israeli archaeological operations are typically reduced or suspended and resumed once attention has receded a pattern whose strategic logic is examined in the following section.

## DATA ANALYSIS

### Realism and Neo-Realism Applied

The realist and neo-realist frameworks collectively illuminate both the structural conditions of the conflict and the motivational logic of Israeli conduct. At the structural level, the absence of effective international authority the anarchic condition identified by Waltz (1959) has permitted Israel to consolidate control over Jerusalem without facing binding legal sanction, despite the consensus of international law that this occupation is unlawful. At the motivational level, Morgenthau's concept of interest defined in terms of power explains the hawkish disposition of successive Israeli governments and their persistent subordination of international legal norms to national security imperatives.

Zakaria's (1998) state-strength variable is particularly useful here. Israel's capacity to mobilise institutional, financial, and legal resources channelled through the IAA, settler organisations, and the Basic Law framework represents precisely the "ability to direct resources in the pursuit of particular interests" that Zakaria identifies as the key intervening variable between systemic

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<sup>10</sup>Article 9 on "Places of Historical and Religious Significance" of the Israel–Jordan Peace Treaty (26 October 1994). Full text available at the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <https://www.mfa.gov.il>

pressures and foreign policy outcomes. Neo-classical realism's emphasis on domestic political structures further explains the role of right-wing Knesset members and settlement movements in shaping and constraining Israeli government options. As Schweller (2004, p. 164) notes, domestic political configurations mediate the translation of external pressures into foreign policy, a dynamic clearly operative in Israeli Jerusalem policy.

The realist framework is, however, inadequate as a complete account. It explains why Israel seeks to consolidate Jerusalem the logic of interest, power, and security but does not fully explain how it does so: through the specific choice of archaeology, law, and demographic engineering rather than open military force. It is here that Sun Tzu's doctrine of indirect warfare provides the most analytically illuminating contribution.

### **Sun Tzu's Indirect Warfare Applied**

Israel's post-1967 strategy in Jerusalem conforms with notable precision to Sun Tzu's doctrine of indirect warfare. Sun Tzu states: "Those skilled in war subdue the enemy's army without battle. They capture his cities without assaulting them and overthrow his state without protracted operations" (Griffith, 2005, p. 118). Israel's approach to Jerusalem after 1967 exemplifies this principle: rather than prosecuting a further military campaign, Israel has employed archaeology, legal expropriation, settlement construction, and demographic transformation as instruments for the effective annexation of the city without generating the level of armed resistance or international censure that direct military operations would inevitably provoke.

Archaeology serves Israel's indirect strategy in several analytically distinct ways. First, it provides a mechanism for land expropriation under Israeli law, enabling the displacement of Palestinian residents and the acquisition of Palestinian-owned property under the rubric of archaeological preservation. Second, systematic excavations particularly in the Holy Basin and around the TMH generate physical evidence of Jewish historical presence in Jerusalem, strengthening Israel's juridical and political claim while minimising the visibility of non-Jewish archaeological layers. Third, the IAA and its associated settler organisations function as what Sun Tzu might have termed an "indirect force": non-state actors pursuing state strategic objectives while maintaining a degree of deniability and operating below the threshold of international legal accountability.

Sun Tzu's maxim that "all warfare is based on deception" (Griffith, 2005, p. 96) applies directly to a strategy conducted under the culturally neutral rubric of archaeological science a frame that

deflects international scrutiny while simultaneously advancing territorial objectives. His counsel to "feign incapacity when capable; when near, make it appear that you are far away" (Griffith, 2005, pp. 96–100) maps onto the pattern of Israeli periodic suspension and resumption of archaeological activities in response to international pressure, examined above.

The inauguration of the Western Wall Tunnel by Prime Minister Netanyahu in September 1996 illustrates these dynamics with particular clarity. Palestinians and the Islamic Movement, led by Sheikh Ra'id Salah, interpreted the tunnel as a covert threat to the structural integrity of the al-Aqsa Mosque, mobilising under the slogan "al-Aqsa in Danger" (Reiter, 2008, pp. 63–91). The ensuing riots demonstrated both the effectiveness of archaeology as a political instrument and the volatility of the environment in which it is deployed. Hamas's designation of its October 2023 offensive as "Operation Al-Aqsa Flood" attests to the enduring resonance of this discourse in Palestinian political mobilisation.

Sun Tzu's broader doctrine of indirect and direct approaches is also relevant here: "He who knows the art of the direct and the indirect approach will be victorious. Such is the art of manoeuvring" (Griffith, 2005, p. 161). Israel has historically deployed direct military force in the wars of 1948 and 1967, and in operations in Gaza and the West Bank. In Jerusalem, however, given the city's singular sensitivity across religious, legal, and geopolitical dimensions, Israel has consistently preferred the indirect approach, consistent with Sun Tzu's counsel that "the worst policy is to attack cities. Attack cities only when there is no alternative" (Griffith, 2005, p. 117).

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings of this analysis carry several implications for both IR theory and Middle East conflict studies. For IR theory, the study demonstrates that the Western realist tradition while analytically powerful in explaining the structural and motivational dimensions of the conflict requires supplementation by non-Western strategic frameworks to account for the operational character of indirect warfare. Sun Tzu's doctrine, developed in a radically different cultural and historical context, nonetheless provides a precise and illuminating vocabulary for the form of political violence documented here: the systematic, multi-vector subversion of an adversary's historical claims, institutional resources, and demographic viability through means short of open military force.

For Middle East conflict studies, the analysis suggests that the concept of indirect warfare as distinct from military occupation, diplomatic negotiation, or civilian resistance constitutes a significant and undertheorised dimension of the conflict. The Israeli archaeological apparatus is not merely an instrument of historical research or cultural heritage management; it is, on the evidence presented, a component of a coherent strategic programme directed toward the permanent consolidation of Jerusalem. Recognising this dimension is a precondition for any adequate analysis of why diplomatic peace processes have consistently failed to produce durable agreements on the status of the city.

Two important qualifications should be noted. First, as indicated in the methodology section, the Sun Tzu-based interpretation rests on structural correspondence rather than documentary evidence of conscious strategic borrowing. Second, Israel's indirect strategy in Jerusalem does not appear to extend to the destruction of Islamic historical monuments on the TMH, which would contradict Israel's own national interest: its normalisation agreements with Egypt (1979), Jordan (1994), and the Abraham Accord states (2020), and its regional aspirations including potential normalisation with Saudi Arabia depend upon a credible commitment to the preservation of Muslim holy sites. The October 7, 2023 attacks and their aftermath have complicated but not fundamentally altered this strategic calculus.

## CONCLUSION

This article has argued that Israel's strategic use of archaeology in Jerusalem constitutes a coherent instance of indirect warfare consistent with the doctrines of Sun Tzu, and that this dimension of Israeli strategy is inadequately captured by Western IR theories of realism and neo-realism alone. Sun Tzu's principle of subduing the adversary without fighting through the systematic destruction of the enemy's strategy, the subversion of its historical claims, and the incremental transformation of the contested environment provides a productive analytical framework for the post-1967 phase of the conflict. Western realism explains the structural conditions and strategic motivations; Sun Tzu explains the operational method.

The implications of this analysis are twofold. For scholarship on the Israel–Palestine conflict, the study suggests that the strategic toolkit of classical East Asian thought offers underutilised resources for explaining forms of political violence that fall below the threshold of conventional military engagement. For IR theory more broadly, it suggests the analytical value of moving

beyond a Eurocentric canon of strategic thought and integrating non-Western intellectual traditions into the discipline's core analytical frameworks.

Future research might fruitfully examine: the extent to which Sun Tzu's thought has been formally incorporated into Israeli military and strategic doctrine; the applicability of the indirect warfare framework to other protracted conflicts in the contemporary international system; and the counter-strategic postures developed by Palestinian and other non-state actors in response to the conditions documented in this study.

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